

I oppose media concentration!

I am writing to comment on Docket No. 02-277, the Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. I strongly believe that the FCC should retain--or strengthen--the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power dominant companies and players in the broadcast industry. They sustain the goals of fair competition, diversity, and local input.

I do not believe that the recent studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate negative effects that media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be more varieties of media, we are choosing from a limited spectrum of views.

I am a fan of talk radio. In the San Francisco Bay Area where I live, a variety of views are available in the talk format, though it is less than before the Clear Channel Network appeared which broadcasts the same programming throughout their market. However, when I drive East from the Bay Area, all I can hear on talk is the conservative viewpoint. Obviously, a large section of the country is unable to participate in a diversity of views on talk radio.

If the FCC allows media outlets to merge and consolidate further, our ability to have an open, informed discussion from a wide variety of viewpoints will be even further compromised. Our forefathers believed that democracy was renewed in the marketplace of diverse ideas. We deserve the right to participate in an informed debate and discussion of current events.

I urge the FCC to preserve the public interest by keeping the media ownership rules in question intact.

I strongly encourage the Commission to hold public hearing on this matter in all parts of the country and solicit the widest possible participation from the public. The freedom of the media is at stake. We laugh at the depauperate media in the middle East. We do not want a similar situation here. Please solicit opinions from those who do not have a financial interest in this issue.

Thank you for your attention,

Ruth Troetschler